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your auxiliaries do all the fighting, but in literary composition this method results in dulness. We hold that to-day the first duty of historical writers should be to present their material in good literary form. A man may "have recourse" to 900 or 9000 works without qualifying himself for writing. In strict accuracy, for instance, would a clear writer have entitled this very book "*A History of Italian Unity*," when Italian Unity began only after the occupation of Rome by the King, the date at which Mr. King's history ends?

WILLIAM ROSCOE THAYER.

*The Life of Prince Bismarck.* By WILLIAM JACKS. (Glasgow : James Maclehose and Sons. 1899. Pp. xvi, 512.)

*Le Prince de Bismarck.* Par CHARLES ANDLER. (Paris : Georges Bellais. 1899. Pp. x, 402).

THE national hero of the military type is usually the subject of a variety of inadequate biographies. For the prominence of spectacular features in such a career awakens an impulse in a host of men to attempt that which is beyond the strength of all but the greatest. Prince Bismarck proves no exception to the rule, and the latest work upon him is open to two general objections. Conceived in a spirit of admiration for services rendered, natural enough in a German, but curious in a Briton, it reflects the uncritical opinions of the common man. The latter, because of the smallness of his stature, is at a disadvantage in any effort to appreciate his greater brother. When the line of upward vision makes a sharp angle with the perpendicular, the power to correctly estimate relations and proportions is gone. In this case there are repeated all the half-legendary conceptions concerning the great issues. For example, the French Cabinet, supported by papal and court influences, is represented after 1866 as resolved upon war, no hint being given of the changes in its membership, or the fluctuations of policy on the part of the Emperor and his advisers.

Again the story of the Hohenzollern candidacy and the events leading up to the final rupture is told in such a way as to reproduce the naïve impression common among the Germans at the time. Corrections made by later additions to our knowledge are left out of account, apart from the incident of the Ems despatch and Bismarck's connection with it, which is told in full.

The second general fault is that, much as the giant's strength and cleverness, his wit and sarcasm, his readiness and far-sightedness are dwelt upon, none of these things are actually seen or felt by the reader. There is no clear-cut presentation of the political issues, and the extraordinary simplicity and directness of Bismarck's methods of meeting them. This is the more remarkable because the account of his political career is mainly composed of extracts from his letters and speeches from the time of the meeting of the Prussian United Diet in 1847 down to the organization of the Reichstag in 1871. The intention is that the man should

reveal himself, but the selections do not serve this purpose, because the translation lacks vigor and incisiveness, while the connecting narrative is frequently partial and not to the point.

Errors of statement are noticeable here and there. One which should be mentioned because it is so frequently repeated is that the Swabian branch of the Hohenzollern family is the younger. On the contrary, the Frankish line from which the Prussian royal family is descended is the younger.

For his study of Prince Bismarck, M. Andler has read copiously and makes good use of his material in the exposition of the administrative reorganization and legislative innovations which have been formulated under the imperial regime. But in the field of international politics his method, which is that of comment rather than of exposition or narration, does not show to advantage. What stands out prominently in this portion of his book, especially when French interests or sympathies come into view, is not his copious reading, but the evidence that he listens credulously and reasons speciously.

For example, the districts of the Old Mark, where Bismarck was born, and Naugard, where he spent most of the years of his youth, are not typical of the respective provinces of Brandenburg and Pomerania, as the author would have us believe. The former province, a sandy country where little grain is grown, the home of an arrogant nobility which supplies the state with army officers and civil officials, is alleged to have endowed Bismarck with one set of qualities; the latter, a region of alluvial soil, the stronghold of aristocrats who are primarily agriculturists and therefore agrarians in politics, to have equipped him with another set. Whatever Bismarck derived from the places of his birth and education, no such classification of the provinces as this is possible. The Oder River, the chief source of the alluvial deposits referred to, covers in its windings a course twice as long in eastern Brandenburg as it does in Pomerania. And neither of these nor the provinces of East and West Prussia can be regarded in any exclusive sense as the home of agrarianism or the breeding-ground of Prussian officialdom.

In his comment upon Bismarck's conduct during the Franco-Prussian war, M. Andler leans almost entirely upon Busch, but his citations do not support his charge of "violent explosions," "blind manifestations and unheard-of-cruelty."

It is however in his discussion of the events which led up to the war that the author relies most upon himself. He admits the restraint shown by the North German Confederation towards the southern states after the downfall of Austria, and the willingness to give Bavaria all the time she wanted to make up her mind that the policy of union was for her own best interest, and yet ventures the unsupported assertion that the war with France was resolved upon by Bismarck, when a hostile majority in the Bavarian Diet overthrew in 1869 the Hohenlohe ministry which favored a closer union. With that sweeping declaration as a point of departure, everything else is easy. There is no difficulty thereafter in

making Bismarck responsible for the "odious intrigue" of the Hohenzollern candidacy. It was merely a "hypocritical pretext" on the part of the Prussian Foreign Office to declare that the affair was outside of its province, and concerned the King alone as head of the dynasty. Then followed in the summer of 1870 the retirement of Bismarck to Varzin, the order to Baron Werther to leave Paris, the sending of the King to Ems. Thither the French ambassador, refused information elsewhere, was compelled to follow him, to be lured into a false position and that false position touched in the despatches of Abeken in such a way as to exasperate French sensibilities. Surely a most elaborate contrivance with which to procure the bloody cement required for fastening the parts of a dismembered nation. But how did it happen that Bismarck set it in operation at a particular time unless he foresaw that the Spanish crisis would become acute at the same moment? And if he foresaw, what superhuman power had come to his aid? And how came it that a workman so practical, so unvisionary, staked everything, his country's fortune and his own, upon the working of a scheme so intricate and so loosely put together that it might break down at any moment? These obstacles to the acceptance of his view M. Andler does nothing to clear away.

*Select Charters and Other Documents Illustrative of American History, 1606-1775.* Edited with Notes by WILLIAM MACDONALD, Professor of History and Political Science in Bowdoin College. (New York: The Macmillan Co. 1899. Pp. ix, 401.)

IN 1898 Professor MacDonald published a volume of *Select Documents of United States History*, beginning with the Declaration of Independence and closing with the Constitution of the Confederate States, 1861. The present volume is constructed upon the same general plan; it begins with the Charter of Virginia, 1606, and ends with the Act prohibiting Trade, December, 1775. The two volumes together cover the entire period of our colonial and national history to the Civil War. In the present volume are eighty documents in all. They are arranged in strict chronological order. The first forty-five articles end with the Treaty of Ryswick, 1697. In this list a very large proportion of the documents are charters. More than two-thirds of them may be found in Poore's *Charters and Constitutions*. Besides the colonial charters there are various other documents, such as the Charter of Privileges to Patroons in the Dutch settlement of New York, 1629, the Fundamental Articles of New Haven, the Maryland Toleration Act, and the various Navigation Acts. Mr. MacDonald calls attention in his preface to the scarcity of historical materials for the first half of the eighteenth century. From 1701 to 1762 he finds only seven documents suited to his purpose; beginning with 1762 and extending to the breaking out of the Revolutionary War, nearly all of the papers selected have reference to the controversy between England and her colonies. The entire space of the book is occupied with the text of the docu-